

Belmont County 4-H Member Handbook



All you need to know for a successful 4-H Year!



TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- 1. 4-H Basics..... 3
- 2. Policies..... 4
- 3. Roles and Responsibilities..... 5
- 4. Projects..... 6
- 5. Events..... 7
- 6. Communication..... 8
- 7. Common 4-H Terms..... 9
- 8. Helpful Websites..... 10
- 9. Tips for Success..... 11



4-H BASICS

4-H is a non-formal educational youth development program offered to individuals aged 5 and in kindergarten to age 19.

But what does this really mean?

The staff that steer the 4-H Program in Belmont County (the 4-H Educator and the 4-H Program Assistant) feel that 4-H is a means for all young people to be able to thrive. This is accomplished through relationships with caring adults, encouraging peers, and exciting events.

4-H doesn't just stop in Belmont County. There is 4-H in all 88 counties in Ohio, each of the 50 United States, and in many countries across the globe. That's right... you just joined a group of over 6 million youth across the world!

But we think the neatest thing about 4-H, is that it was started right here in Ohio in Clark County in 1902 by Mr. Albert Belmont Graham. He had a dream to raise the standard of rural life. He stressed the dignity of hard work and sound character, and he taught that agriculture could be improved by applying the ideas of science. We are still carrying out this mission today, although it surely looks a little different.

At its core, 4-H is a community of young people across the world who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills as they work in partnership with caring adults. 4-H is committed to helping young people develop skills that will help them succeed in life. We want to empower all youth to reach their full potential.

In 4-H, youth learn by doing with projects that are designed to fit their needs at different ages. Through a variety of projects - from food and forestry to rockets and rabbits - 4-H gives children and teens opportunities to learn life skills, to practice them in a safe environment, and therefore become confident in their ability to use them in the future.

In Ohio, 4-H is programmatically under the leadership of Ohio State University Extension, who employs the professionals who serve as the 4-H Educator and 4-H Program Assistant. OSU Extension governs the program and enforces many policies and procedures, outlined in the next section.

4-H POLICIES

As a Belmont County 4-H member there are several policies you should be aware of, and several that you sign in agreement to during online enrollment each spring. These policies are listed below with a description. All state policies can be viewed at <https://ohio4h.org/volunteers/volunteers/club-leaders/club-management-resources-policies-and-procedures>

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Code of Conduct outlines the expected conduct of all participants in Ohio 4-H, including members, parents, families, volunteers, and 4-H Professionals. This document is the behavioral standard for all 4-H members and is strictly upheld.

VOLUNTEER STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR

All adult volunteers with Ohio 4-H sign the Standards of Behavior – of which the purpose is to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants and guide volunteer behavior during their involvement with Ohio 4-H. It outlines the requirements and expectations of volunteers in detail.

DRUG & ALCOHOL USE POLICY

Prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs, controlled substances, marijuana, marijuana products, electronic cigarettes, and alcohol at any 4-H related event involving youth, in accordance with federal regulations.

TOBACCO USE POLICY

Prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of all tobacco products at any 4-H related event involving youth.

ACROSS COUNTY LINES POLICY

Youth are expected to affiliate with the 4-H program in the county in which they reside most of the time. There are, however, exceptions to this policy. If a member wishes to participate in a county other than which they live, they should consult this policy and submit appropriate forms no less than 30 days prior to enrollment.

DRESS CODE

All Belmont County 4-H Members are expected to dress appropriately for all 4-H events. Please reference page 11 for details.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure success, it is important for all involved with 4-H to understand their roles and responsibilities. Each role is broken down below.

MEMBERS

Members are at the core of Ohio 4-H. They are the ones learning by doing and are responsible for their own growth – through taking projects, participating in clubs and other events, and taking advantage of the many opportunities that are open to them. Members should understand what is expected of them by their club and county and be quick to ask questions if they don't understand something.

FAMILIES

4-H families are the first support to a 4-H member. They are responsible for providing help to members as they complete projects and participate in many different events throughout the year. The family is also responsible for helping the member to understand and adhere to any rules and regulations that are required.

VOLUNTEERS

4-H volunteers are the “boots on the ground” in terms of leadership in the 4-H program. They work closely with the 4-H professionals to implement programming such as club meetings, camp, and other events throughout the year. Volunteers complete specialized annual training to ensure they are creating and maintaining safe spaces for 4-H families. They convey information to families as needed and serve as a first point of contact for any questions.

4-H PROFESSIONALS

4-H Professionals guide the Ohio 4-H program. There are professionals at the national, state, and county level. In the county, the 4-H Educator is the main contact, and the 4-H Program Assistant provides extra support to the Educator and 4-H program. Each county has a different structure – Belmont is lucky to have both an Educator and a Program Assistant thanks to funding from the Belmont County Commissioners.

The 4-H Professionals are responsible for planning and implementing all events that pertain to 4-H in a program year, provide administrative leadership, work with community partners such as the local Junior and Senior Fair Boards, and provide ample learning opportunities for youth in their county.

PROJECTS

The best way for members to “learn by doing” is to complete 4-H projects each year. All members MUST take at least one project of the member’s choice each program year. Projects are selected during enrollment, and are tied to the club the member selects. Shooting sports projects MUST be enrolled with the Belmont County Shooting Sports Club. There is no limit to how many a member can take, but it is suggested no more than 5. Newer members should take 1 or 2 projects in their first few years until they become more acquainted with the program.

PROJECT LIST:

A full list and descriptions of all 250+ projects can be found at <https://ohio4h.org/familyguide>

Members select their projects each year during the online enrollment process. The project books are then ordered by club advisors and distributed to members to begin working on.

PROJECT COMPLETION:

For a member to “complete” a year in 4-H, they must have successfully completed at least one of their projects. To be considered complete, a member must have attended judging for that project. More details about judging are included in the “Events” and “Tips for Success” sections of this handbook.

PROJECT EXHIBITION AT THE BELMONT COUNTY FAIR:

Once completed, members are eligible to exhibit their projects at the Belmont County Fair. **FAIR EXHIBITION IS NOT A REQUIREMENT FOR PROJECT COMPLETION**. However, members who exhibit their project are eligible to receive premiums from the Belmont County Agricultural Society (Belmont County SFB) as an incentive for showing off their hard work from the year. Still projects (non-livestock) are exhibited in the 4-H Booth Building. Livestock projects are also exhibited in the club booths but may be exhibited as live animals during the livestock shows. Market animals are eligible to be sold through the livestock sale for the profit of the member if all Belmont County Junior Fair rules and regulations are upheld throughout the program year.

EVENTS

There are many events that take place throughout the 4-H year. Some of which are mandatory for 4-H members, and some of which are optional. The most prominent events are outlined below. All information about Belmont County 4-H events can be found on the website.

4-H CAMP

Each summer, members in grades 3-7 are invited to attend 4-H Junior Camp. This 4-day, 3-night summer camp allows youth to grow, learn, and play in a safe and welcoming environment. Lead by a group of well trained and excited camp counselors, ages 14-18, this camp gives members the opportunity to participate in outdoor education and confidence building at an overnight camping facility.

Teen camp is open to members ages 13-18, where recent alumni serve as the counselors. A career-exploration based camp helps members to explore interest and hear from professionals in the field. This camp is also 4 days and 3 nights and is held at an overnight camping location.

Cloverbud camp is a day-camp which is open to all Cloverbuds.

STILL PROJECT JUDGING

Still Project Judging is the event in which members complete interviews for their non-livestock projects. At Still Project Judging, members complete an interview with a topic expert volunteer and have their project book reviewed for completion. Members compete against peers that have selected the same project, and topic area winners are selected. Each project's highest score is invited to attend the Ohio State Fair 4-H Judging for that project. All projects a member is enrolled in must be judged to be considered complete. There is no minimum score required for completion.

LIVESTOCK SKILL-A-THON

Livestock Skill-A-Thon is the event in which members complete their livestock projects. It consists of a skill station specific to their livestock species, a review of the livestock project book, and an interview of the member to assess knowledge gained. Members who receive a 90 or higher receive the "Outstanding Project Knowledge" (OPK) award. All livestock projects a member is enrolled in must be judged to be considered complete. There is no minimum score required for completion.

BELMONT COUNTY FAIR

The Belmont County Fair is the event where members can exhibit their projects from the program year. Exhibition is not required for project completion – but is highly encouraged.

COMMUNICATION

For a member to be successful, it is important to understand how to receive and find information about the 4-H program. Below is a quick listing of the communication methods most used by the Belmont County Extension Office to relay information to 4-H families.

EMAIL

Email is by far the most used means of communication. Information is sent via email to families using the 4-H Online system. It is pertinent that families ensure they have access to the email listed on their account and check it regularly to ensure they are getting all the needed information.

FACEBOOK

In addition to emails, most important information is also posted to the Facebook page, "Belmont County 4-H Program". Program staff also share fun photos and tidbits about the awesome things that happen in Belmont County 4-H!

WEBSITE

The Belmont County Extension website (Belmont.osu.edu) is full of useful information from all program areas, but 4-H families will be the most interested in the 4-H section. Here, information for almost anything families need can be found. Registrations, forms, general information, and more is housed on the website. (REMINDER – the Belmont County 4-H staff are NOT web designers. If unable to find something or a link is "broken" please let staff know and it will be fixed!)

NEWSLETTERS

The Belmont County 4-H Clover Chronicle is a bi-monthly newsletter that contains all the information families will need to know for the next few months of the 4-H year. Families are encouraged to read it in its entirety to stay up to date with the program. All families will receive a copy via email, or by postal mail if requested.

POSTAL MAIL

Occasionally, the Belmont County 4-H staff will send postal mail to families if needed. Typically, this is done for information that is especially pertinent to a member's success, or if a paper form is needed.

CLUB ADVISORS

Finally, club advisors are used to pass along a plethora of information from the office staff to families. They are a wealth of knowledge, and it is encouraged for families to become comfortable asking questions to club advisors if needed.

COMMON 4-H TERMS

4-H Online – also 4HO. The 4-H enrollment software. Used to track members and participation.

Cloverbuds – 4-H members ages 5 and in kindergarten through 2nd grade, or until they reach the age and grade requirements for project age membership. Cloverbuds are non-competitive and do not participate in still or livestock projects.

CFAES – College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences. The department which houses OSU Extension, the employer of the 4-H Professionals.

DUNF – Drug Use Notification Form. A USDA mandated form which must be completed for each livestock animal exhibited at fair.

Enrollment – the process in which members sign up to participate in 4-H each year. Completed online.

Family Guide – document published yearly from Ohio State University Extension Publishing which contains a complete list with descriptions of all 4-H projects.

JFB/SFB – Junior/Senior Fair Board. SFB is also Belmont County Agricultural Society (BCAS). These groups provide leadership for the Belmont County Fair. Any JFB/SFB rules are decided and enforced by these board members.

LQA – Livestock Quality Assurance. An Ohio Dept. of Agriculture mandated requirement for livestock exhibitors to attend. Teaches members good production practices and general livestock care.

Program Year – the 4-H program year is November 1st through October 31st.

Project Members – 4-H members age 8 and in 3rd grade or age 9 through age 18 as of January 1st of the program year. Project members complete projects in which they compete against their peers at judging.

Teen Ambassadors - a group of Belmont County 4-H teen members who promote 4-H to the county and participate in community service events.

Volunteers/Advisors – adults who complete annual training requirements. Volunteers can be assigned to a club or help at specific events.

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Belmont County 4-H

Belmont.osu.edu/program-areas/4-h-youth-development

Belmont County Extension

Belmont.osu.edu/home

Ohio 4-H

Ohio4h.org

Project Central

Projectcentral.ohio4h.org

Belmont County Fair

Belmontcountyfair.org

4-H Online

v2.4honline.com

Ohio State fair

ohiostatefair.com

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

DRESS CODE

The Belmont County 4-H program expects all members to dress appropriately and in a way that is respectful to others at 4-H events. Some events may require more specific guidelines, but all events at least adhere to the following:

- Neat and clean appearance.
- No midriffs showing.
- No cleavage showing.
- No undergarments visible.
- No spaghetti strap tank tops.
- No cut-off shirts (hem or sleeve).
- No advertising of tobacco, marijuana, or alcohol products on clothing.
- No inappropriate language on clothing.

PHONE ETIQUETTE

It is good practice to follow proper phone etiquette in today's age. This includes:

- Only making calls/texts between 9:00am and 9:00pm to respect the other person's personal time.
- Not making more than two calls/texts without a reply.
- Be polite to those around you when having a phone conversation, i.e. – don't carry on a phone conversation while trying to also talk to someone in person.
- Keep the call/text about 4-H.
- Before you call, look through it all! Consult the resources available to you for answers before asking questions.

PROJECT JUDGING FAQ

What should I expect prior to project judging? – A schedule will be posted for both Still Project and Livestock Skill-A-Thon Judging which members will need to adhere to. This will be sent via email as well as posted on the Facebook Page.

How should I dress for success? – The 4-H Dress code should always be followed at 4-H events. In addition to the dress code, members should dress in business casual for project judging. Remember, this is an interview – members should dress like it!

What should I expect when I arrive to project judging? – for both Still Project and Livestock Skill-A-Thon Judging, there will be a registration, waiting, and holding area for members. Clear signage will be posted to assist members, and there will be many volunteers you can ask for help. Members should expect to be at judging anywhere from 1-4 hours, depending on how many projects they have completed.

What do I need to bring to judging? – The following components are required for all projects:

- One Page Report – this report is a project summary which outlines what the member has learned from taking this project. Some projects have a project summary contained within the project book. It is expected that members complete BOTH the project summary in the book AND a separate one-page, printed report. The paper report should be one page, typed, double spaced, and using 12-point font.
- A completed project book – the project book should be as complete as possible. See front of project book for information.
- Some projects will require extra materials. Still projects often require a portfolio of project activities or a poster detailing the learning experience. Requirements specific to each project can be found on the website in mid-spring.

What should I expect after project judging? – Members will not receive results the day of judging. Once each judging is complete, the scoresheets are taken back to the Extension Office for tallying and placing. Scoresheets are then sorted by club to be distributed back to the club advisors for distribution to members at their discretion. Project winners will be announced via email, Facebook, and/or newsletter. All members will receive a project grade and corresponding ribbon during booth set up at the Belmont County Fair.

- For Still Project winners, an invitation to participate in the Ohio State Fair 4-H Judging as a Belmont County delegate/alternate will be extended. There is a State Fair workshop the week after Still Project Judging and one week before the

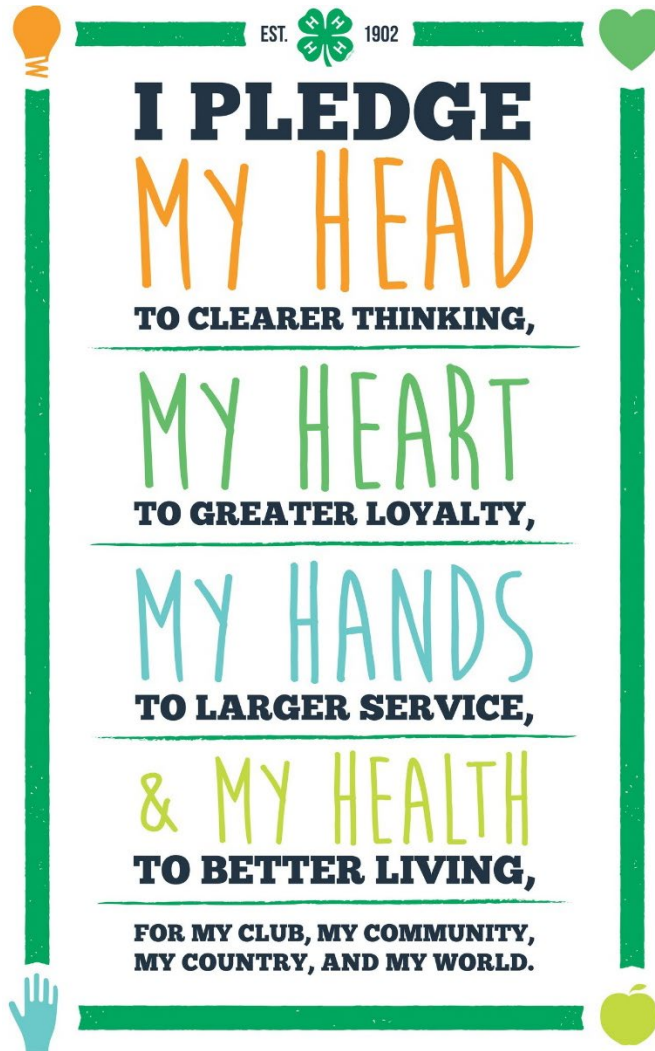
Ohio State Fair – this workshop provides more information to help delegates be successful at the State Fair.

Continued on next page.

What are other tips to be successful? – practicing general interview guidelines will help members be successful. This includes:

- Shaking the interviewer’s hand before and after the interview
- Making eye contact with the interviewer
- Listen carefully to the questions and respond thoughtfully.
- Only bring what you need for the interview.
- Always thank the interviewer for their time as you leave.

Is there any other way to complete a project? – Members are highly encouraged to attend project judging; however, things come up. There is a make-up judging date one week after the Livestock Skill-A-Thon date where members can complete their judging for both Still Projects and Livestock Skill-A-Thon. Members who take advantage of this are not eligible for county awards or participation at the Ohio State Fair 4-H Judging. All projects may also be reviewed by club advisors for completion, but livestock projects **MUST** participate in Skill-A-Thon for exhibition eligibility. The **ONLY** dates to complete Skill-A-Thon are on Livestock Skill-A-Thon Judging Day and Make-up Judging Day.



BELMONT COUNTY 4-H CONTACT INFORMATION

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